



**Transit and Rail Advisory Committee  
 Meeting Minutes  
 January 11, 2019  
 1:00 – 4:00 PM**

**2829 W. Howard Place, Denver, CO 80204 / Valley Highway Conf Room #158**

Member	Organization	Yes	No	Member	Organization	Yes	No
Ann Rajewski	CASTA		X	Rob Eaton	Amtrak	X	
Sara Cassidy	Union Pacific RR		X	Larry Worth	Rural Transit	X	
Lee Cryer (for Bill Van Meter)	RTD	X		Mike Ogborn	Ogborn Consulting / Short-line railroad		X
Craig Blewitt	Mountain Metro Transit	X		Danny Katz	CoPIRG	X	
David Johnson	Roaring Fork Transit	X		Steve Hurlbert	I-70 Coalition / Local jurisdictions		X
Jim Souby	Colo Rail	X		Peter Rickershauser	BNSF Railway		X
Matthew Helfant	DRCOG	X		Will Jones	City of Greeley / Small urban areas	X	
Terri Binder	Club 20	X		Vince Rogalski	STAC	X	

Others Present	CDOT Present
	David Krutsinger, Director/DTR Brodie Ayers, DTR Sharon Terranova, DTR Michael Snow, DTR Gail Hoffman, Statewide Planning Section Nate Vander Broek, DTR Kenna Davis, DTR Brian Hartman, DTR Qing Lin, DTR Bob Wilson, CDOT Communications Jane Hickey, DTR Rocio Ramirez, DTR Mike Timlin, DTR Andy Karsian, CDOT Legislative Liaison

**1. Introductions/Meeting Overview/Welcome**

Craig Blewitt called the meeting to order at 1:05, welcoming everyone to the meeting, asking for a round-table roll call.

**2. Round Table – Craig Blewitt**

- Danny Katz mentioned that CoPIRG hosted an event to promote education around the dangers of bald tires. Included in the event were bumper stickers with “#baldtiresuck”. Education included teaching people about the quarter method, as well as encourage people to use Bustang and other forms of transit instead of driving.

- Darren Davis is the new Greeley Evans Transit Manager.
- Craig Blewitt said that Mountain Metro Transit approved their 2019 budget, which will maintain the current level of service. MMT was approved for a bus storage facility that will accommodate their growth. Their triannual review with FTA is delayed due to the Federal Government shut down.

### 3. **Statewide Transit Plan** – Nate Vander Broek (attachment)

- RFP released on November 9.
- Proposals due on December 20.
- Received proposals from four consulting teams.
- RFP Scoring Committee, consisting of several TRAC members, met on January 7 to discuss proposals.
- Oral interviews for the top 2 teams are January 14th.
- Firms selected the week of January 21 (estimated).
- Contract executed February 21 (estimated).
- Data gathering and coordination with the Statewide Transportation Planning team to continue throughout.

### 4. **Statewide Legislative Update** – Andy Karsian (attachment)

- Not much to update on from last TRAC meeting. The new congressional session has just begun.
- Legislature will have larger conversation about transit and multimodal as in the past
- Conversations will include electric vehicles and 18-21 year olds for CDL to drive interstate routes, which will need Federal Government approval
- Failed propositions on 2017 ballot
  - Democratic wave with newly elected officials, but not with ballot measures
  - Record voter turnout, but not enough turnout in bellwether counties for places that need transportation improvements
  - Highest approval came from counties with interstates going through them, located on the Western Slope or in urban areas (especially 110)
  - Prop. 109 did not pass in a single county
  - Prop. 110 – only passed in five counties
  - El Paso and Denver Counties passed transportation ballot measure the year before
    - Do not want to pass a second statewide measure
  - The size of prop. 110 made people scared of the state spending billions of dollars, even with website explanation of equity across the state
  - Misunderstanding of why sales tax instead of gas tax
    - People in field understand why, diminishing returns and other negative qualities associated with a gas tax
    - Why sales? It polled well – this will play out in legislative for small increase in gas tax and user fees
    - Not large chunk of change for the voters, but adds up for funding for transportation

### 5. **Ballot Measure / RFTA** – David Johnson (attachment)

- Property tax passed by voters (51%)
- Intended to diversify fleet with electric buses
- Passengers prefer coaches for long routes, increase seating capacity as well
- Craig Blewitt – What lessons have been learned? Confidence in organization?
- David Johnson – We do have a lot of trust from the community
  - Especially with implementation of BRT – popular with transit riders, 7 minute frequency, competitive travel times with automobiles
- Detailed planning for mill levy, financial model summary to public, a lot of homework,
- Takeaway – do your homework, and show public condensed amount of research/information (not everyone wants to know everything)

- Danny Katz – Transit tax increases involve expansion (map and plan), how did you visually convey what you are doing? New buses? Or how did you show the public what you were planning on doing?
- David Johnson – Project website (<https://www.rfta2040.com>) shows improvements, fleet replacement and expansion, variety of capital projects and improvements.
  - Did not emphasize too much on decrease in service if the mill levy did not pass by 20-25% during off peak times. Would have led to a decrease in service while demand is increasing. Transit improvements are not just nice things to do for community, they are essential. Expected 20-25% increase in employment and residents in area over next decades. People are relying on transit as well as congestion reduction.
- Danny Katz – who was leading vote yes-campaign or no-campaign?
- Davis Johnson – No organized opposition to this campaign, but did win with narrow margin. Board members were involved, two led the campaign.

#### 6. SB 18 – 001 – David Krutsinger (attachment)

- New governor – funds allocated sooner rather than later (by March), remainder to follow
- \$94 million, 15% to CDOT, and other 85% to TPR'S (about \$85 million)
- Separate committee for this money allocation (groups listed in sheet) – Transportation Commission approved and names starting to be filled in
- Questions to be answered – how to distribute money to TPR's, and should there be any adjustments for 50/50 match?
- This group had come up with distribution formula, but without multimodal or TDM
  - Concept, not approved or adopted, needs to be multimodal
- Terri Binder – How did we get from only transit last spring to multimodal? What made that happen
- David Krutsinger – Legislation defines SB 1 as a multimodal option fund, intent to help TPR's for prop. 110 projects
  - Transportation Commission – Legislation says to use population and ridership, but if ridership is weighted then more money goes to RTD. If weighted toward population then more money to rural areas. Guaranteed minimums for rural TPR's. Population did take the smallest part of the state totally out of the picture. Percentages based on roughly \$2 billion dollar fund from prop. 110. Small percent now to small population area.
- Terri Binder – Pedestrians and bikes are not as important for rural areas; transit is what is needed. How is that appropriated to an area like Dove Creek, do they need bike lanes and trails?
- David Krutsinger – We are asking to find bike and pedestrian areas in need will that change the data already presented, could employment or population represent bikes/pedestrians.
- Lee Cryer – Usually more biking and walking where there is transit
- David Johnson – Study in RFTA, diverse rate of trip making in region, biking and walking for utilitarian purposed, not just recreation.
  - Spent 2 years going to member organizations, clear at this time around that there wasn't one magic transportation need in the area – trails, transit, bike and pedestrian needs. Can send this information to committee. Bike and pedestrian not as used to get around but still very important.
- Lee Cryer – look at ACS data for commute by mode, but only captures work trips, and may be undercounted.
- Craig Blewitt – Capital or operation?
- David Krutsinger – Capital projects only, but up to TPR's to determine.
- Craig Blewitt – Federal funds can be matching?
- David Krutsinger – Yes federal funds can match.
- Craig Blewitt – For operating, there should be matching fund. Require match for all projects or some exceptions. There should be match, but if there are exceptions based on extenuating circumstances.
- David Krutsinger – Matching defined in paper, if TPR wants to fund \$10,000 study for bus facility, do we want to require match and go through the process for such a low amount?

- Reporting requirement – have to tell state legislature where all this money is going
  - TPR's will have full responsibility to allocate money – up to 300 projects
  - Reporting requirements could be small, but could be much more, report annually, what percent complete, match rate, and state procurement policy. Need to go back to legislature for more clarification
  - Jim Souby – Legislature could be convinced that efficiency is more important than depth.
- David Krutsinger – David Johnson expect two meetings on calendar because current forecast of committee for Transportation Commission. To meet in March, so that decisions are made before money comes.
- Danny Katz – \$14 million CDOT allocation?
- David Krutsinger – Yes, CDOT, one time application to find 3-5 main street for full multimodal projects, sidewalks, bike lanes, new bus shelters (Bustang), Wi-Fi at bus stop – show how a DOT can be multimodal, no park-n-rides.
- Internally for \$14 million – Splice it? Allocation for each mode? Legislature expects us to do something interesting but can't when divide the money 5 ways.
- Danny Katz – Is there a formal process for this?
- Bob Wilson– How are these chosen?
- David Krutsinger – Data, Outrider bus stops, main street info from TPR's , mapping fiber network (to activate Wi-Fi or something for first mile/last mile connectivity)
- Bob Wilson– Five projects, split between five regions?
- David Krutsinger – If we get more than 5 projects, then not as meaningful projects, not tied to doing one per region, even though politically attractive.
- Danny Katz – June or July?
- Danny Katz – Having gone through process of 110 – local looking at multimodal needs, is there tension from that process, worry about some regions look at this and put together example and other regions didn't hear about this soon enough, what would transit agency or TPR say about this?
- David Krutsinger – \$14 million is CDOT's money to spend, \$85 million to going to TPR's, we are looking at state highways and where CDOT can fit into that.
- Danny Katz – people want fighting chance that they can propose something to you and that they didn't get passed by
- David Krutsinger – Transparent about all of SB1 and so no one feels left behind
- Terri Binder– Is it only rural? Or could Denver and Boulder also submit?
- David Krutsinger – In urban areas, doing stuff on state highways is more expensive than \$3-4 million in terms of environmental impacts, such as Wadsworth or Colorado Blvd. because of stakeholders.
- Robert Eaton– True multimodal projects could be near passenger rail.

#### **7. SB 267 (non-rural) – David Krutsinger (attachment)**

- Craig Blewitt – Pay back funds, Share in the risk?
- David Krutsinger – CDOT needs to look into this more. State legislature will pay back fund but if enter into partnership projects, then risk that later the state legislature will not honor paying back and then would be on CDOT to pay back funds.
- Craig Blewitt – If local governments have obligations then need to budget, bring up cash flow problems, take on burden not quite certain of this.
- David Krutsinger – That part needs to be looked at. In September, we had list of ten projects, then no one would care if propositions passed because of the little pots of money. Now that it didn't pass, we need to go back to the transit development program and go through an intense scoring process in March and May, looking at project readiness, project supported list of over 100 to go through at conceptual level (qualitative ratings) and then move to more quantitative to get final list.
- List of 100% park-n-rides when thought prop. 110 passed, now looking forward, Bustang has gotten so large that we need a bus storage facility in Colorado Springs or Pueblo. Diverge from all park-n-

rides. Lessen own CDOT portion and have higher portion of grant or partnership agency projects. \$14 million park-n-ride and \$18 million for partnership projections.

- Danny Katz – Biggest question is what column to look in, what local partner agencies are interested in taking on this risk. First step is articulating this risk and if not then have to do the 100% CDOT bucket completely. As someone who has been involved, the risk is very high with 20 years of repayment, especially when CDOT is looked to see as having a lot of money. Interested to see if local partner agency is even interested.
- David Krutsinger – Need outreach to partners and to do our homework
- Danny Katz – Hesitant to focus only on park-n-rides, appreciate opportunity to look at other projects.

#### **8. Southwest Chief Front Range Rail Commission Update – Jim Souby / Pete Rickershauser / David Krutsinger (attachment)**

- Phases that Rail Commission visioned for future of rail – \$2.5 million to hire Executive Director for Rail Commission, and start FRA compliant environmental work.
- Quick version of what was accomplished in 2018 – \$25 million for SW Chief
- Jim Souby – Look at politics, ballot measures see how we want to approach. Some loose ends, but next steps look right. Good support for Amtrak.
- Robert Eaton – Ray Lang from Amtrak is interested in Front Range rail – Amtrak 2.0 is looking at urban centers. Look at legislature and the Transportation Commission. Next steps, Omnibus operation if passes, SW Chief funding, TIGER grant funding, and look at appropriations with federal government.
- David Krutsinger – Discussion this morning, Amtrak 2.0, does this mean any significant changes or downgrade to rural areas?
- Robert Eaton – No, but looking at major markets around the U.S. (LA-LV, Dallas, CO Front Range, Florida)
- Danny Katz – Isn't this out of the blue?
- Jim Souby – Three senators from each party say absolutely no, we have given you enough money.
- Robert Eaton – Follow direction of congress.
- Jim Souby – Bipartisan House support. Any one from rural areas understands connection
- Danny Katz – How can we support and ramp up funding?
- Robert Eaton – Plan and introduce to Congress.
- Danny Katz – Possible to run passenger rail along Front Range within next couple of years?
- Jim Souby – Worried about funding, Congress said the wall could interfere. FRA had a hand in this, regulatory had seen investment and could get congressional and bipartisan support.
- Robert Eaton – New Mexico piece, need to look at that, capital program, ownership and maintenance of operating the train of the right of way. Have to look at how to handle with New Mexico or other states.
- David Krutsinger – Because of the partnerships, impacts to the transit funding has been small and leverages a significant amount of money, leveraged \$100 million in partnerships, if Omnibus adds \$50 million off \$2.5 million from Colorado goal of preserving SW chief.

#### **9. Capital Call Update – Qing Lin (attachment)**

- Planning Unit called for projects but now falls onto Programing Unit under new DTR structure
  - First call is for settlement, SB 267 (\$9.5 million is for rural), SB 1 – minimum for \$32 million, we have 18 million but because of local match that spread out over five years.
  - 80 applications, 42 from existing agencies, 3 from new agencies
  - First committee is with Eric and Nate to score for vehicle and expansion facilities.
  - Michael Snow - lead for settlement funds.
  - March meeting - proposed award list.
- Danny Katz – It it public (applications) – settlement funds, what people are applying for?

- Michael Snow – Can put together list of summary of these or google drive with all of the applications.
- David Krutsinger – TRAC in November – \$18 million in settlement funds but release over five years, were worried there was not enough interest. But amount asked shows that we have need far and above \$18 million for transit. Thought rural agencies wouldn't be ready to apply until next year.
- Michael Snow – Survey asking how many agencies would be seeking alternative fuel vehicles in the first year or for the next year? Making year one awards with that survey in mind.
- David Krutsinger – Include summary of survey for first year review.
- Craig Blewitt – Additional funding for settlement funds – allocating more than \$3.6 million per year, trying to access some of the unallocated funds.
- Michael Snow – Makes case to interagency that we have need and can access the reserve \$12 million dollars. Don't have to spend money quickly to have that argument. Need to look at long term fuel plan as well, can go to settlement committee to show demand. Better proportion than what we got of the whole settlement pot.
- Matthew Helfant – Fair to say that requests for expansion vehicles is less than for true demand because CDOT says priority for replacement vehicles.

#### **10. Outrider – Phase 3 / stakeholder outreach – Mike Timlin (attachment)**

- Mike has been working with HDR for last couple of months to prioritize 21 routes for Outrider phase 3 expansion.
  - Subsidies Greyhound from Denver to Salt Lake City – not dealing with that but will in future.
  - HDR has completed methodology published in *Transit Cooperation Research Program* in 1990's for rural transit.
- Top five routes on map – Trinidad to Pueblo, Sterling and Greeley, Grand Junction to Telluride, Montrose and Gunnison, Crested Butte to Gunnison
  - Telluride to Grand Junction new study done
  - Grand Junction as western Colorado major hub – get people round trip in one day.
- Phase 3 would be working with local transit entities, and not working with private for profits, provide money for agencies and rolling stock.
- Next three months – visit 15 TPR's/ MPO's and get their input. If not ready to operate then move onto the next who is ready.

#### **11. Bustang Fare Increase – Mike Timlin (attachment)**

- loss of CDL drivers, RTD deals with this as well as most transit agencies in the state.
  - Critical problem – Bustang operation impacted because there are not enough drivers
  - 2 lines on west, Denver to Vail and Denver to Fort Collins
  - Express line to support winter recreation, all buses including express are full.
  - Have had to overload buses, no back up drivers, did contract with Summit Express and have gone to capacity with them too.
  - Average in January – 263 people per day on west line.
- David Krutsinger – Growth rate for Bustang is a good problem to have, but now it's too much because customers are left at the bus stop.
- Mike Timlin – Met with ACE Express – insurance costs are rising and wages are low. Nine percent increase in funding to increase driver wages so they can meet RTD's minimum. Talking with CDOT there is also a problem hiring plow drivers, Intermountain region is struggling.
- Fuel as a cost per mile has gone up from \$0.379 to \$0.519 since FY2015-2016 – 1 million revenue miles is this year's benchmark
- Wheel cost versus revenue is increasing - recommending a fare increase to offset that.
  - 17 cent to 18 cents per mile fare increase, provide smaller increase in lower fuel bands, but higher in longer fuel band
  - Instead suggesting a straight dollar increase for all routes.

- Present to STAC and Transportation Commission. No increase until May schedule change.
- Craig Blewitt – Thought process on why long trips incentivized instead of short trips. Ft Collins to Denver? Commuters?
- Mike Timlin – Multi-ride ticket purchases aren't going to see the price increase, just single trip
- Terri Binder – Are salaries too low or is it just low unemployment?
- Mike Timlin – Commercial drivers and airline pilots are under a lot of federal regulation. Yearly health exams, so people worry about job stability. Drug screening causes difficulties. Driving record is scrutinized. Private sector insurance companies are extremely picky on who is allowed to drive. Will look at driving records themselves.
- Terri Binder – Regulation is deterring people from profession.
- Mike Timlin – RTD has had to deal with minimum wage increases and with wage prices, people choose other professions.
  - Department of Corrections has a program to drive trucks, but can't do that for passenger buses.
- Danny Katz – Snow plow, paying certain amount because government employee, but with contracting out that doesn't apply?
- Mike Timlin – Yes, they can pay what they agreed to us, and we have obligation to make sure expenses appropriate and CDOT must make sure they are being paid what was agreed upon.
  - Training in southern California but different regulation because of California laws, a recovery plan to bring those trained there and driving trucks to switch to passenger bus.
- Lee Cryer – RTD offers CDL training, but the agency has more leverage
- ***The Committee voted unanimously to recommend approval of a \$1 fare increase to Bustang services.***

## 12. State Management Plan – Brodie Ayers (attachment)

- Timeline
  - Draft Final – Mid January 2019
  - Out for comment late January Out for comment late January
  - Submit SMP to FTA – Mid February 2019
  - Expect FTA approval June 2019
  - Publish Approved SMP to website – July 2019 July
- Update every three years – policies and procedures, not codified but do in conjunction with SMR.

## 13. Additional items

- Craig Blewitt – Time of TRAC meetings and chair/vice chair set up.
- David Krutsinger – talked with Ann about changing the charter to have a chair and vice chair to vote on that in March.
- Jim Souby – Convenient to have commission and TRAC on the same day, improves travel time.
- Robert Eaton – For those who travel its more convenient, or just Thursday and Friday.
- Craig Blewitt – Timed TRAC with STAC – STAC is no longer on same day.
- David Krutsinger – Not a specific time but assumed SW Chief is not always going to be at the same time/same Friday. One meeting Thursday afternoon, one Friday. Two meetings back to back. Craig how much time to move up to combat commute?
- Craig Blewitt – Earlier is better
- Larry Worth – Brown bag lunch – get out at three?
- Terri Binder – Stay on Friday
- Jim Souby – Thought something has passed it would be on Thursdays but keep meeting on Fridays.
- David Krutsinger – Every other month – 12-3 pm
- Jim Souby – TRAC on the train?

- Robert Eaton – Can make that happen, either on California Zephyr or SW Chief. Would the elected Vice chair become president the next year?
- David Krutsinger – No, just coverage, not necessarily to go into the next year. Nomination process through email. Please email and then show list to TRAC in March.
- Terri Binder – March meeting early?
- David Krutsinger – Can at noon.
- Jim Souby – ColoRail Passenger Newsletter, lots of college kids because they can ride the train for free but have to show up for safety brief. Shows enthusiasm for rail though.

**14. Meeting adjourned at 3:36 pm – Craig Blewitt**